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ADMINISTRATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THE political differences which have generated parties in this country date back to an early period. They existed under the old confederation, were perceptible in the formation of the Constitution and establishment of "a more perfect union." Differences on fundamental principles of government led to the organization of parties which, under various names, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, divided the people and influenced and often controlled national and State elections. Neither of the parties, however, has always strictly adhered or been true to its professed principles. Each has, under the pressure of circumstances and to secure temporary ascendancy in the Federal or State governments, departed from the landmarks and traditions which gave it its distinctive character. The *Centralists*, a name which more significantly than any other expresses the character, principles, and tendency of those who favor centralization of power in a supreme head that shall exercise paternal control over States and people, have under various names constituted one party. On the other hand, the *Statists*, under different names, have from the first been jealous of central supremacy. They believe in local self-government, support the States in all their reserved and ungranted rights, insist on a strict construction of the Constitution and the limitation of

Federal authority to the powers specifically delegated in that instrument.

The broad and deep line of demarcation between these parties has not always been acknowledged. Innovation and change have sometimes modified and disturbed this line; but after a period the distinctive boundary has reappeared and antagonized the people. During the administration of Mr. Monroe, known as the "era of good feeling," national party lines were almost totally obliterated, and local and personal controversies took their place. National questions were revived, however, and contested with extreme violence during several succeeding administrations. Thirty years later, when the issues of bank, tariff, internal improvements, and an independent treasury were disposed of, there was as complete a break up of parties as in the days of Monroe. It was not, however, in an "era of good feeling" that this later dislocation of parties took place; but an attempt was made in 1850 by leading politicians belonging to different organizations to unite the people by a compromise or an arrangement as unnatural as it was insincere—party lines if not obliterated were, as the authors intended, in a measure broken down. This compromise, as it was called, was a sacrifice of honest principles, and instead of allaying disputes, was followed by a terrific storm of contention and violence tran-

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scending anything the country had ever experienced, and ended in a civil war.

The time has not yet arrived for a calm and dispassionate review of the acts and actors of that period and the events of the immediately succeeding years; but the incidents that took place and the experience so dearly purchased should not be perverted, misunderstood, or wholly forgotten.

The compromises of 1850, instead of adjusting differences and making the people of one mind on political questions, actually caused in their practical results the alienation of life-long party friends, led to new associations among old opponents, and created organizations that partook more of a sectional character than of honest constitutional differences on fundamental questions relative to the powers and authority of the Government, such as had previously divided the people. The facility with which old political opponents came together in the compromise measures of 1850, and abandoned principles and doctrines for which they had battled through their whole lives, begot popular distrust. Confidence in the sincerity of the men who so readily made sacrifices of principles was forfeited or greatly impaired. The Whig party dwindled under it, and as an organization shortly went out of existence. A large portion of its members, disgusted with what they considered the insincerity if not faithlessness of their leaders, yet unwilling to attach themselves to the Democratic party, which had coalesced in the movement, gathered together in a secret organization, styling themselves "Know Nothings." Democrats in some quarters, scarcely less dissatisfied with the compromises, joined the Know Nothing order, and in one or two annual elections this strange combination, without avowed principles or purpose, save that of the defeat and overthrow of politicians, who were once their trusted favorites, was successful. In this demoralized condition of affairs, the Democrats by the accession of Whigs in the Southern States obtained posses-

sion of the Government and maintained their ascendancy through the Pierce administration; and, in a contest quite as much sectional as political, elected Buchanan in 1856.

But these were the expiring days of the old Democratic organization, which, under the amalgamating process of the compromise measures, became shattered and mixed, especially in the Southern States, with former Whigs, and was to a great extent thereafter sectionalized. The different opposing political elements united against it and organized and established the Republican party, which triumphed in the election of Lincoln in 1860. The administration which followed and was inaugurated in 1861 differed in essential particulars from either of the preceding political organizations. Men of opposing principles—Centralists, who like Hamilton and patriots of that class were for a strong imperial national government, with supervising and controlling authority over the States, on one hand, and Statists on the other, who, like Jefferson, adhered to State individuality and favored a league or federation of States, a national republic of limited and clearly defined powers, with a strict observance of all the reserved right of the local commonwealths—were brought together in the elections of 1860. It has been represented and recorded as grave history that the Republican party was an abolition party. Such was not the fact, although the small and utterly powerless faction which, under the lead of William Lloyd Garrison and others, had for years made aggressive war on slavery, was one of the elements which united with Whigs and Democrats in the election of Mr. Lincoln. Nor was that result a Whig triumph, though a large portion of the Whigs in the free States, after the compromises of 1850, from natural antagonism to the Democrats, entered into the Republican organization. While it is true that a large majority of the Whigs of the North relinquished their old organization and became Republicans, it is

no less true that throughout the slave States, and in many of the free States, the members of the Whig party to a considerable extent supported Bell or Breckenridge. But Democrats dissatisfied with the measures of the Pierce and Buchanan administrations, in much larger numbers than is generally conceded, took early and efficient part in the Republican organizations—some on account of the repeal of the Missouri compromise, but a much larger number in consequence of the efforts of the central Government at Washington, by what was considered by them an abuse of civil trust, and by military interference, to overpower the settlers in Kansas, denying them the right of self-government, and an attempt arbitrarily and surreptitiously to impose upon the inhabitants against their will a fraudulent Constitution. It was this large contribution of free-thinking and independent Democrats, who had the courage to throw off party allegiance and discipline in behalf of the principles of free government on which our republican system is founded, the right of the people to self-government, and, consequently, the right to form and establish their own constitution without dictation or interference from the central government so long as they violated no provision of the organic law, that gave tone, form, and ascendancy to the Republican party in every free State.

Persistent efforts have been made to establish as historical truths the representations that the civil war had its origin in a scheme or purpose to abolish slavery in the States where it existed, and that the election of Abraham Lincoln was an abolition triumph—a premeditated, aggressive, sectional war upon the South; whereas the reverse is the fact—the Republican party in its inception was a strictly constitutional party, that defended the rights of the people, the rights of the States, and the rights of the Federal Government, which were assailed by a sectional combination that was not satisfied with the Constitution as it was, but proposed

to exact new guarantees from the nation for the protection of what they called “Southern rights”—rights unknown to the Constitution. The misrepresentations that the Republicans were aggressive and aimed to change the organic law have not been without their influence, temporarily at least, in prejudicing and warping the public mind. It is true that the slavery question was most injudiciously and unwisely brought into the party controversies of the country; but it was done by the slaveholders or their political representatives in Congress after the failure of the nullifiers to obtain ascendancy in the Government on the subject of free trade and resistance to the revenue laws.

John C. Calhoun, a man of undoubted talents, but of unappeasable ambition, had at an early period of his life, while Secretary of War, and still a young man, aspired to the office of President. By his ability and patriotic course during the war of 1812, and subsequently by a brilliant career as a member of Mr. Monroe’s Cabinet, he had acquired fame and a certain degree of popularity which favored his pretensions, particularly with young men and army officers. Schemes and projects of national aggrandizement by internal improvements, protection to home industries, large military expenditures, and measures of a centralizing tendency which were popular in that era of no parties, gave him *éclat* as Secretary of War. Flattered by his attentions and by his shining qualities, military men became his enthusiastic supporters, and received encouragement from him in return. It was the first attempt to elect so young a man to be Chief Magistrate, and was more personal than political in its character. In the memorable contest for the succession to President Monroe, Mr. Calhoun at one time seemed to be a formidable candidate; but his popularity being personal was evanescent, and failed to enlist the considerate and reflecting. Even his military hopes were soon eclipsed by General Jack-

son, whose bold achievements and successes in the Indian and British wars captivated the popular mind. Jackson had also, as a representative and Senator in Congress, Judge of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, and Governor of Florida, great civil experience. Mr. Calhoun was, however, in the political struggle that took place in 1824, elected to the second office of the republic, while in the strife, confusion, and break up of parties no one of the competing candidates for President received a majority of the electoral votes. He and his supporters submitted to, it may be said acquiesced in, the result then and also in 1828, when General Jackson was elected President and Mr. Calhoun was reelected to the office of Vice-President. This acquiescence, however, was reluctant; but with an expectation that he would in 1833, at the close of General Jackson's term, be the successor of the distinguished military chieftain.

But the arrangements of calculating politicians often end in disappointments. Such was the misfortune of Mr. Calhoun. His ambitious and apparently well contrived plans had most of them an abortive and hapless termination. Observation and experience convinced him, after leaving Mr. Monroe's Cabinet, that the educated and reflective Statists or State rights men of the country, and especially of the South, would never sanction or be reconciled to the exercise of power by the Federal Government to protect the manufacturing interests of New England, or to construct roads and canals in the West, at the expense of the National Treasury. These were, however, favorite measures of a class of politicians of the period who had special interests to subserve, and who carried with them the consolidationists, or advocates of a strong and magnificent central government. The tariff, internal improvements, and kindred subjects became classified and known in the party politics of that day as the "American system"—a system of high taxes and large expenditures

by the Federal Government—without specific constitutional authority for either. Parties were arrayed on opposite sides of this system, which, besides the political principles involved, soon partook of a sectional character. High and oppressive duties on importations, it was claimed, were imposed to foster certain industries in the North to the injury of the South.

Henry Clay, a politician and statesman of wonderful magnetic power, was the eloquent champion of the "American system," and enlisted in his favor the large manufacturing interest in the North and the friends of internal improvement in the West. These measures were made national issues, and Mr. Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives, appropriated them to his personal advancement, and was their recognized leading advocate. Mr. Calhoun could not be second to his Western rival, but abandoned the policy of protection, internal improvements, and great national undertakings, and allied himself to the commercial and plantation interests, which opposed the system, expecting to identify himself with and to receive the support of the Statists. But the strict constructionists of Virginia, Georgia, and other States of the old Jefferson school distrusted him and withheld their confidence and support.

South Carolina, erratic, brilliant, and impulsive, had never fully harmonized with the politicians of Virginia in their political doctrines, but had been inclined to ridicule the rigid and non-progressive principles of her statesmen, who, always cautious, were now slow to receive into fellowship and to commit themselves to the new convert who sought their support. They slighted him, and rejected his nullification remedies. Instead of following the Palmetto State in her fanatical party schemes on the alleged issue of free trade, and supporting her "favorite son" in his theories, they sustained General Jackson, whose Union sentiments they approved, and who, to the disgust of Calhoun, became a

candidate for reelection in 1832 and received the votes of almost the whole South.

In this crisis, when the heated partisans of South Carolina in their zeal for free trade and State rights had made a step in advance of the more staid and reflecting Statists, and undertook to abrogate and nullify the laws of the Federal Government legally enacted, they found themselves unsupported and in difficulty, and naturally turned to their acknowledged leader for guidance. To contest the Federal Government, and pioneer the way for his associates to resist and overthrow the Administration, Mr. Calhoun resigned the office of Vice-President and accepted that of Senator, where his active mind, fertile in resources, could, and as he and they believed would extricate them. There was, however, at the head of the Government in that day a stern, patriotic, and uncompromising Chief Magistrate, who would listen to no mere temporizing expedients when the stability of the Union was involved, and who, while recognizing and maintaining the rights of the States, never forgot the rights that belonged to the Federal Government. In his extremity, when confronting this inflexible President, Mr. Calhoun hastened to make friends with his old opponents, Clay, Webster, and the protectionists, the advocates of the "American system," the authors and champions of the very policy which had been made the pretext or justification for nullification and resistance to Federal law and the Federal authority. This coalition of hostile factions combined in a scheme, or compromise, where each sacrificed principles to oppose the administration of Jackson. It was an insincere and unrighteous coalition which soon fell asunder.

In the mean time, while nullification was hopelessly prostrate, and before the coalition was complete, the prolific mind of the aspiring Carolinian devised a new plan and a new system of tactics which it was expected would

sectionalize and unite the South. This new device was a defence of slavery—a subject in which the entire South was interested—against the impudent demands of the abolitionists. Not until the nullifiers were defeated, and had failed to draw the South into their nullification plan, was slavery agitation introduced into Congress and made a sectional party question with aggressive demands for national protection. The abolitionists were few in numbers, and of little account in American politics. Some benevolent Quakers and uneasy fanatics, who neither comprehended the structure of our Federal system nor cared for the Constitution, had annually for forty years petitioned Congress to give freedom to the slaves. But the statesmen of neither party listened to these unconstitutional appeals until the defeated nullifiers professed great apprehension in regard to them, and introduced the subject as a disturbance, and made it a sensational sectional issue in Congress and the elections.

From the first agitation of the subject as a party question, slavery in all its phases was made sectional and aggressive by the South. Beginning with a denial of the right to petition for the abolition of slavery, and with demands for new and more exacting national laws for the arrest and rendition of fugitives, the new sectional party test was followed by other measures; such as the unconditional admission of Texas, the extension of slavery into all the free territory acquired from Mexico, the repeal of the Missouri compromise, a denial to the people of Kansas of the right to frame their own constitution, and other incidental and irritating questions that were not legitimately within the scope of Federal authority. Fierce contentions prevailed for years, sometimes more violent than at others.

In 1850 a budget of compromises, which has already been alluded to, involving a surrender of principles and an enactment of laws that were unwarranted by the Constitution, and

offensive in other respects, had been patched up by old Congressional party leaders, ostensibly to reconcile conflicting views and interests, but which were superficial remedies for a cancerous disease, and intended more to glorify the authors than to promote the country's welfare. Both of the great parties were committed by the managers to these compromises, but the effect upon each was different. The Whigs, tired of constant defeat, hoped for a change by the compromises that would give them recognition and power; but instead of these they found themselves dwarfed and weakened, while the Democrats, who yielded sound principles to conciliate their Southern allies, were for a time numerically strengthened in that section by accessions from the Whigs. Old party lines became broken, and in the Presidential contest of 1852 the Democratic candidate, General Pierce, a young and showy, but not profound man, was elected by an overwhelming majority over the veteran General Scott, who was the candidate of the Whigs. From this date the Whig organization dwindled and had but a fragmentary existence. Thenceforward, until the overthrow of the Democratic party, the Government at Washington tended to centralization. Fidelity to party, and adherence to organization with little regard for principle, were its political tests in the free States. Sectional sentiments to sustain Southern aggressions, under the name of "Southern rights," were inculcated, violent language, and acts that were scarcely less so, prevailed through the South and found apologists and defenders at the North. Presidents Pierce and Buchanan, literally "northern men with southern principles," were submissive to these sectional aggressions, acquiesced in the repeal of the Missouri compromise, the extension and nationalizing of slavery, hitherto a State institution, and also to the schemes to prevent the establishment of a free constitution by the people of Kansas. The mass of

voters opposed to the policy of these administrations, and who constituted the Republican party, were not entirely in accord on fundamental principles and views of government, but had been brought into united action from the course of events which followed the Mexican war, the acquisition of territory, and the unfortunate compromises of 1850. The sectional strife, for the alleged reason of Lincoln's election and Republican success, which eventuated in hostilities in 1861, and the tremendous conflict that succeeded and shook the foundation of the Government during the ensuing four years, threatening the national existence, absorbed all minor questions of a purely political party character, and made the Cabinet of Mr. Lincoln, though its members entertained organic differences, a unit. There were occasions when the antecedent opinions and convictions of the members elicited discussion in regard to the powers, limitations, and attributes of government; but in the midst of war disagreeing political opinions as well as the laws themselves were silenced. Each and all felt the necessity of harmonious and efficient action to preserve the Union.

This was especially the case during the first two years of the war of secession. Not only the President's constitutional advisers, but the Republican members of Congress, embracing many captious, factious, and theoretical controversialists, acted in harmony and concert. Murmurs were heard among its friends, and dissatisfaction felt that the Administration was not sufficiently energetic or arbitrary, and because it did not immediately suppress the rebellion. A long period of peace which the country had enjoyed rendered the malcontents incapable of judging of the necessities of preparation for war. "On to Richmond" became the cry of the impatient and restless before the armies mustered into service were organized. The violent and impassioned appeals of excited and mischievous speakers

and writers created discontent and clamor that could not always be appeased or successfully resisted. Not content with honest if not always intelligent criticism of the Government, some editors, papers, writers, and speakers, at an early period and indeed throughout the war, condemned the policy pursued, assumed to direct the management of affairs, and advanced crude and absurd notions of the manner in which the Government should be administered and military operations conducted. For a period after the rout at Bull Run, which seemed a rebuke to these inconsiderate partisans, there was a temporary lull of complaints and apparent acquiescence by Republicans in the measures of administration.

Military differences and army jealousies existed from the beginning, which were aggravated and stimulated by partisan friends and opponents of the rival officers, and by dissent from the policy pursued in the conduct of military affairs to which many took exception.

General Scott was the military oracle of the Administration in the first days of the war. His ability and great experience entitled him to regard and deference on all questions relating to military operations. No one appreciated his qualities more than the President, unless it was General Scott himself, who with great self-esteem was nevertheless not unconscious that his age and infirmities had impaired his physical energies, and in some respects unfitted him to be the active military commander. It was his misfortune that he prided himself more if possible on his civil and political knowledge and his administrative ability than on his military skill and capacity. As a politician his opinions were often chimerical, unstable, and of little moment; but his military knowledge and experience were valuable. With headquarters at Washington, and for thirty years consulted and trusted by successive administrations of different parties in important emer-

gencies, internal and external, and at one time the selected candidate of one of the great political parties for President, he had reason to feel that he was an important personage in the republic; also that he was competent, and that it was a duty for him to participate in political matters, and to advise in civil affairs when there were threatened dangers. But while he was sagacious to detect the premonitory symptoms of disturbance, and always ready to obey and execute military orders, he was in political and civil matters often weak, irresolute, and infirm of purpose. He had in the autumn of 1860 warned President Buchanan of danger to be apprehended from the secession movement, and wisely suggested measures to preserve peace; but he soon distrusted and abandoned his own suggestions. Without much knowledge of Mr. Lincoln, and believing erroneously, as did many others, that Mr. Seward was to be the controlling mind in the new administration, he early put himself in communication with that gentleman. The two agreed upon the policy of surrendering or yielding to the States in secession the fortresses within their respective limits. It has been said, and circumstances indicate that there was also an understanding by Mr. Seward with certain secession leaders, that the forts, particularly Sumter, if not attacked, should not be reinforced. Of the plans of Mr. Seward and General Scott, and the understanding which either of them had with the secessionists, President Lincoln was not informed; but, while he had a sense of duty and a policy of his own, he attentively and quietly listened to each and to all others entitled to give their opinions.

The reports of Major Anderson and the defence of Sumter being military operations, the President, pursuant to Mr. Seward's advice, referred to General Scott, and it was supposed by those gentlemen that the President acquiesced in their conclusions. Nor were they alone in that supposition, for the

President, while cautiously feeling his way, sounding the minds of others, and gathering information from every quarter, wisely kept his own counsel and delayed announcing his determination until the last moment. He was accused of being culpably slow, when he was wisely deliberate.

When his decision to reinforce Sumter was finally made known, the Secretary of State and the General-in-Chief were surprised, embarrassed, and greatly disappointed; for it was an utter negation and defeat of the policy which they had prescribed. The General, like a good soldier, quietly and submissively acquiesced; but Mr. Seward, a man of expedients and some conceit, was unwilling and unprepared to surrender the first place in the Administration, and virtually publish the fact by an Executive mandate which upset his promised and preferred arrangements. It was then that he became aware of two things: first, that neither himself nor General Scott, nor both combined, were infallible with the Administration; and second, that the President, with all his suavity and genial nature, had a mind of his own, and the resolution and self-reliance to form, and the firmness and independence to execute a purpose. They had each overestimated the influence of the other with the President, and underestimated his capacity, will, and self-reliance. When the Secretary became convinced that he could not alter the President's determination, he conformed to circumstances, immediately changed his tactics, and after notifying the authorities at Charleston that the garrison in Sumter was to be supplied, he took prompt but secret measures to defeat the expedition by detaching the flagship, and sending her, with the supplies and reinforcements that had been prepared and intended for Sumter, to Fort Pickens. In doing this he consulted neither the War nor Navy Departments, to which the service belonged; but discarding both, and also the General-in-Chief, his preceding special confidant, and with

whom he had until then acted in concert, he took to his counsel younger military officers, secretly advised with them and withdrew them from their legitimate and assigned duties. The discourtesy and the irregularity of the proceeding, when it became known, shocked General Scott. His pride was touched. He felt the slight, but he was too good an officer, too subordinate, and too well disciplined, to complain. The secret military expedition undertaken by the Secretary of State without the knowledge of the proper departments and of himself, was so irregular, such evidence of improper administration, that he became alarmed. He felt keenly the course of Mr. Seward in not consulting him, and in substituting one of his staff as military adviser for the Secretary of State; but he was more concerned for the Government and country.

A native of Virginia, and imbued with the political doctrines there prevalent, but unflinching in patriotism and devotion to the Union and the flag, General Scott hesitated how to act—objected to the hostile invasion of any State by the national troops, but advised that the rebellious section should be blockaded by sea and land. He thought that surrounded by the army and navy the insurgents would be cut off from the outer world, and when exhausted from non-intercourse and the entire prostration of trade and commerce they would return to duty; the “anaconda principle” of exhausting them he believed would be effectual without invading the territory of States. When the mayor of Baltimore and a committee of secessionists waited upon the President on the 20th of April to protest against the passage of troops through that city to the national capital, he, in deference to the local government, advised the President to yield to the metropolitan demand, and himself drew up an Executive order to that effect. The seizure of Harper's Ferry and Norfolk and the threatened attack upon Washington greatly disturbed him, but not so much as the

wild cry of the ardent and impulsive which soon followed of "on to Richmond" with an undisciplined army.

Sensible of his inability to take the field, he acquiesced in the selection if he did not propose after the disaster at Bull Run, that General McClellan should be called to Washington to organize the broken and demoralized Army of the Potomac. A thorough reorganization was promptly and effectually accomplished by that officer. In a few days order, precision, and discipline prevailed—the troops were massed and a large army was encamped in and about the national capital. But it was soon evident to the members of the Administration that there was not perfect accord between the two Generals. The cause and extent of disagreement were not immediately understood.

At a Cabinet meeting which took place in September at the headquarters of the General-in-Chief by reason of his physical infirmities, a brief discussion occurred which developed coolness if not dissatisfaction. An inquiry was made by the President as to the exact number of troops then in and about Washington. General McClellan did not immediately respond—said he had brought no reports or papers with him. General Scott said he had not himself recently received any reports. Secretary Seward took from his pocket some memoranda, stating the number that had been mustered in a few days previous, and then went on to mention additional regiments which had arrived several successive days since, making an aggregate, I think, of about ninety-three thousand men. The General immediately became grave.

When the subject matter for which the Cabinet and war officers had been convened was disposed of, some of the gentlemen left, and General McClellan was about retiring, when General Scott requested him to remain, and he also desired the President and the rest of us to listen to some inquiries and remarks which he wished to make. He was very deliberate, but evidently very

much aggrieved. Addressing General McClellan, he said:

"You are perhaps aware, General McClellan, that you were brought to these headquarters by my advice and by my orders after consulting with the President. I know you to be intelligent and to be possessed of some excellent military qualities; and after our late disaster it appeared to me that you were a proper person to organize and take active command of this army. I brought you here for that purpose. Many things have been, as I expected they would be, well done; but in some respects I have been disappointed. You do not seem to be aware of your true position; and it was for this reason I desired that the President and these gentlemen should hear what I have to say. You are here upon my staff to obey my orders, and should daily report to me. This you have failed to do, and you appear to labor under the mistake of supposing that you and not I are General-in-Chief and in command of the armies. I more than you am responsible for military operations; but since you came here I have been in no condition to give directions or to advise the President because my chief of staff has neglected to make reports to me. I cannot answer simple inquiries which the President or any member of the Cabinet makes as to the number of troops here; they must go to the State department and not come to military headquarters for that information."

Mr. Seward here interposed to say that the statement he had made was from facts which he had himself collected from day to day as the troops arrived. "Do I understand," asked General Scott, "that the regiments report as they come here to the Honorable Secretary of State?"

"No, no," said Mr. Cameron, who wished to arrest or soften a painful interview. "General McClellan is not to blame; it is Seward's work. He is constantly meddling with what is none of his business, and (alluding to the Pickens expedition) makes mischief in

the war and navy departments by his interference."

There was in the manner more than in the words a playful sarcasm which Seward felt and the President evidently enjoyed. General McClellan stood by the open door with one hand raised and holding it, a good deal embarrassed. He said he had intended no discourtesy to General Scott, but he had been so incessantly occupied in organizing and placing the army, receiving and mustering in the recruits as they arrived, and attending to what was absolutely indispensable, that it might seem he omitted some matters of duty, but he should extremely regret if it was supposed he had been guilty of any disrespect.

"You are too intelligent and too good a disciplinarian not to know your duties and the proprieties of military intercourse," said General Scott; "but seem to have misapprehended your right position. I, you must understand, am General-in-Chief. You are my chief of staff. When I brought you here you had my confidence and friendship. I do not say that you have yet entirely lost my confidence. Good day, General McClellan."

A few weeks later General Scott was on his own application placed upon the retired list, and General McClellan became his successor. Disaffection on the part of any of the officers, if any existed, did not immediately show itself; the army and people witnessed with pride the prompt and wonderful reorganization that had taken place, and for a time exulted in the promised efficiency and capabilities of the "young Napoleon." But the autumn passed away in grand reviews and showy parades, where the young General appeared with a numerous staff composed of wealthy young gentlemen, inexperienced, untrained, and unacquainted with military duty, who as well as foreign princes had volunteered their services. Parades and reviews were not useless, and the committal of wealthy and influential citizens who were placed upon his staff had its ad-

vantages; but as time wore on and no blow was struck or any decisive movement attempted, complaints became numerous and envy and jealousy found opportunity to be heard.

The expectation that the rebellion would be suppressed in ninety days, and that an undisciplined force of seventy-five thousand men or even five times that number would march to Richmond, clear the banks of the Mississippi, capture New Orleans, and overwhelm the whole South, had given way to more reasonable and rational views before Congress convened at the regular session in December. Still the slow progress that was made by the Union armies, and the immense war expenditures, to which our country was then unaccustomed, caused uneasiness with the people, and furnished food and excitement for the factions in Congress.

The anti-slavery feeling was increasing, but efforts to effect emancipation were not controlling sentiments of the Administration or of a majority of Congress at the commencement or during the first year of Mr. Lincoln's term, although such are the representations of party writers, and to some extent of the historians of the period. Nor did the Administration, as is often asserted and by many believed, commence hostilities and make aggressive war on the slave States or their institutions; but when war began and a national garrison in a national fortress was attacked, it did not fail to put forth its power and energies to suppress the rebellion and maintain the integrity of the Union. Military delays and tardy movements were nevertheless charged to the imbecility of the Government. It is not to be denied that a portion of the most active supporters of the President in and out of Congress and in the armies had in view ulterior purposes than that of suppressing the insurrection. Some were determined to avail themselves of the opportunity to abolish slavery, others to extinguish the claim of reserved sovereignty to the States, and a portion were favorable to

both of these extremes and to the consolidation of power in the central Government; but a larger number than either and perhaps more than all combined were for maintaining the Constitution and Union unimpaired.

The President, while opposed to all innovating schemes, had the happy faculty of so far harmonizing and reconciling his differing friends as to keep them united in resisting the secession movement.

Abraham Lincoln was in many respects a remarkable man, never while living fully understood or appreciated. An uncultured child of the frontiers, with no educational advantages, isolated in youth in his wilderness home, with few associates and without family traditions, he knew not his own lineage and connections. Nor was this singular in the then condition of unsettled frontier life. His grandfather, with Daniel Boone, left the settled part of Virginia, crossed the Alleghany mountains, penetrated the "dark and bloody ground," and took up his residence in the wilds of Kentucky near the close of the Revolutionary war. There was little intercourse with each other in the new and scattered settlements destitute of roads and with no mail facilities for communication with relatives, friends, and the civilized world east of the mountains. Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the President, was a nephew of Daniel Boone, and partook of the spirit of his brave and subsequently famous relative. But his residence in his secluded home was brief. He was killed by the Indians when his son Thomas, the father of President Lincoln, was only six years old. Four years later the fatherless boy lost his mother. Left an orphan, this neglected child, without kith or kindred for whom he cared or who cared for him, led a careless, thriftless life, became a wandering pioneer, emigrated from Kentucky when the President was but seven years old, took up his residence for several years in the remote solitudes of Indiana, and drifted at a later day to Illinois.

This vagrant life, by a shiftless father, and without a mother or female relative to keep alive and impress upon him the pedigree and traditions of his family, left the President without definite knowledge of his origin and that of his fathers. The deprivation he keenly felt. I heard him say on more than one occasion that when he laid down his official life he would endeavor to trace out his genealogy and family history. He had a vague impression that his family had emigrated from England to Pennsylvania and thence to Virginia; but, as he remarked in my presence to Mr. Ashmun of Massachusetts, and afterward to Governor Andrew, there was not, he thought, any immediate connection with the families of the same name in Massachusetts, though there was reason to suppose they had a common ancestry.

Having entered upon this subject, and already said more than was anticipated at the commencement, the opportunity is fitting to introduce extracts from a statement made by himself and to accompany it with other facts which have come into my possession since his death—facts of which he had no knowledge.

In a brief autobiographical sketch of his life, written by himself, he says:

I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams and others in Macon county, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham county, Virginia, to Kentucky, about 1781 or 2, where, a year or two later, he was killed by Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks county, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age; and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer county, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time the State came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up.

There were some schools, so called ; but no qualification was ever required of a teacher, beyond reading, writing, and ciphering to the rule of three. If a straggler, supposed to understand Latin, happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher, to the rule of three ; but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, and passed the first year in Macon county. Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard county, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store.

In addition to the foregoing I may add that among my acquaintance in central Pennsylvania were several sisters whose maiden name was Winters. Two of these sisters were wives of Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Another sister was the wife of William Potter, a member of Congress of some note from that State and son of General Potter of the Revolution. These sisters were the great aunts of President Lincoln, and I subjoin an obituary notice of the younger sister, Mrs. Potter, who died in 1875, at the advanced age of eighty-four. There are some incidents not immediately connected with the subject that might be omitted, but I think it best to present the obituary in full:

Died, in Bellefonte, at the residence of Edward C. Humes, on Sunday morning, the 30th of May A. D. 1875, Mrs. Lucy Potter, relict of Hon. William W. Potter, deceased, aged eighty-four years, nine months, and two days.

Mrs. Potter was a member of a large and rather remarkable family ; her father having been born in 1723, married in 1747, died in 1794 ; children to the number of nineteen being born to him, the eldest in 1743, the youngest in 1790—their birth extending over a period of forty-two years. William Winters, the father of the deceased, came from Berks county to Northumberland, now Lycoming county, in the year 1773, having purchased the farm lately known as the Judge Grier farm, near what was called Newberry, but now within the corporate limits of the city of Williamsport. Mr. Winters was twice married. His first wife was Ann Boone, a sister of Colonel Daniel Boone, famous in the early annals of Kentucky. His marriage took place in the year 1747 in the then province of Virginia. By this union there were issue eleven children, four males and seven females. His eldest daughter, Hannah, married in Rockingham county, Virginia, Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of President Lincoln. Shortly

before his death, Lincoln, who was killed by the Indians, visited his father-in-law at what is now Williamsport, and John Winters, his brother-in-law, returned with him to Kentucky, whither Mr. Lincoln had removed after his marriage ; John being deputed to look after some lands taken by Colonel Daniel Boone and his father.

They travelled on foot from the farm, by a route leading by where Bellefonte now is, the Indian path "leading from Bald Eagle to Franks-town."

John Winters visited his sister, Mrs. Potter, in 1843, and wandering to the hill upon which the Academy is situated, a messenger was sent for him, his friends thinking he had lost himself ; but he was only looking for the path he and Lincoln had trod sixty years before, and pointed out with his finger the course from Spring creek, along Buffalo run, to where it crosses the "Long Limestone Valley," as the route they had travelled.

Upon the death of Mr. Winters's first wife, in 1771, he again, in 1774, married. His second wife was Ellen Campbell, who bore him eight children, three males and five females, of which latter the subject of this notice was the youngest.

The father of Mrs. Potter died in 1794, and in 1795 Mrs. Ellen Winters, his widow, was licensed by the courts of Lycoming county to keep a "house of entertainment" where Williamsport now is—where she lived and reared her own children as well as several of her step children.

Here all her daughters married, Mary becoming the wife of Charles Huston, who for a number of years adorned the bench of the Supreme Court of this State ; Ellen, the wife of Thomas Burnside, who was a member of Congress, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and finally a Justice of the Supreme Court ; Sarah, the wife of Benjamin Harris, whose daughter, Miss Ellen Harris, resides on Spring street in this borough ; Elizabeth, the wife of Thomas Alexander, a carpenter and builder, who erected one of the first dwellings in Williamsport, at the corner of what are now Pine and Third streets in that city, and many of whose descendants are still living in Lycoming county ; Lucy, the wife of William W. Potter, a leading politician in this county, who died on the 15th day of October, 1838, while a member of our national Congress.

Mrs. Potter continued with her mother's family in Lycoming county, frequently visiting her two sisters, Mrs. Huston and Mrs. Burnside, who resided in Bellefonte, where, in 1815, she was united in marriage, by Rev. James Linn, with William W. Potter, a young and rising lawyer, and son of General James Potter, one of the early settlers of the county. Here, with her husband until his death, and then, upon the marriage of her niece, Miss Lucy Alexander, with Mr. Edward C. Humes, she made her home, living continuously in this town since her marriage, and having survived her husband for the long period of thirty-seven years, being that length of time a widow.

The biographers of President Lincoln have none of them given these facts because they did not know them, nor was the President himself aware of them. Of their authenticity so far

as the relationship of Mr. Lincoln with the family of Winters is concerned, I have no doubt. His ancestry in this country, paternal and maternal—Lincoln, Boone, and Winters—is to be traced to the county of Berks, Pennsylvania.

A roving child of the forest, where there were not even village schools, Abraham Lincoln had little early culture, but his vigorous native intellect sought information wherever it could be obtained with limited means and opportunities, and overcame almost insuperable obstacles. His quick perception and powers of observation and reflection, and his retentive memory were remarkable; his judgment was good, his mental grasp and comprehension equal to any emergency, his intentions were always honest, and his skill and tact, with a determination to always maintain the right, begot confidence and made him successful and great. Party opponents imputed his success under difficulties that seemed insurmountable to craft and cunning; but while not deficient in shrewdness, his success was the result not of deceptive measures or wily intrigue, but of wisdom and fidelity with an intuitive sagacity that seldom erred as to measures to be adopted, or the course to be pursued. It may be said of him, that he possessed inherently a master mind; and was innately a leader of men. He listened, as I have often remarked, patiently to the advice and opinions of others, though he might differ from them; treated unintentional errors with lenity, was forbearing, and kind to mistaken subordinates, but ever true to his own convictions. He gathered information and knowledge whenever and wherever he had opportunity, but quietly put aside assumption and intrusive attempt to unduly influence and control him.

Like all his Cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Blair, who had been educated at West Point, he was without military pretension when he entered upon his executive duties and encoun-

tered at the very threshold a civil war which had been long maturing, was deeply seated, and in its progress was almost unprecedented in magnitude. Neither he nor any of his advisers had personal, official, practical experience in administering the civil service of the Federal Government. The commencement of hostilities, before they had time to become familiar with their duties, imposed upon each and all labors and cares beyond those of any of their predecessors. To these were added the conduct of military operations as novel as they were responsible. Unprepared as the country was for the sudden and formidable insurrection, the Administration was not less so, yet it was compelled at once to meet it, make preparations, call out immense armies, and select officers to organize and command them.

These commanders were most of them educated military officers, but possessed of limited experience. Their lives had been passed on a peace establishment, and they were consequently without practical knowledge. Many of these, as well as such officers as were selected from civil life, seemed bewildered by their sudden preferment, and appeared to labor under the impression that they were clothed not only with military but civil authority. Some in the higher grades imagined that in addition to leading armies and fighting battles, they had plenary power to administer the Government and prescribe the policy to be pursued in their respective departments. Much difficulty and no small embarrassment was caused by their mistaken assumptions and acts, in the early part of the war.

J. C. Fremont, the western explorer, a political candidate for the Presidency in 1856, and made a major general by President Lincoln at the beginning of the rebellion in 1861, was assigned to the command of the western department. He evidently considered himself clothed with proconsular powers; that he was a representative of the Government in a civil

capacity as well as military commander, and soon after establishing his headquarters at St. Louis assumed authority over the slavery question which the President could neither recognize nor permit. General Hunter, at Port Royal, and General Phelps, in the Gulf, each laboring under the same error, took upon themselves to issue extraordinary manifestoes that conflicted with the Constitution and laws, on the subject of slavery, which the President was compelled to disavow. The subject, if to be acted upon, was administrative and belonged to the Government and civil authorities—not to military commanders. But there was a feeling in Congress and the country which sympathized with the radical generals in these anti-slavery decrees, rather than with the law, and the Executive in maintaining it. The Secretary of War, under whom these generals acted, not inattentive to current opinion, also took an extraordinary position, and in his annual report enunciated a policy in regard to the slavery question, without the assent of the President and without even consulting him. Mr. Lincoln promptly directed the assuming portion of the report, which had already been printed, to be cancelled; but the proceeding embarrassed the Administration and contributed to the retirement of Mr. Cameron from the Cabinet. These differences in the army, in the Administration, and among the Republicans in Congress, extended to the people. A radical faction opposed to the legal, cautious, and considerate policy of the President began to crystallize and assume shape and form, which, while it did not openly oppose the President, sowed the seeds of discontent against his policy and the general management of public affairs.

The military operations of the period are not here detailed or alluded to, except incidentally when narrating the action of the Administration in directing army movements and shaping the policy of the Government. Nearly one-third of the States were, during

the Presidency of Mr. Lincoln, unrepresented in the national councils, and in open rebellion. A belt of border States, extending from the Delaware to the Rocky mountains, which, though represented in Congress, had a divided population, was distrustful of the President. Yielding the Administration a qualified support, and opposed to the Government in almost all its measures, was an old organized and disciplined party in all the free States, which seemed to consider its obligations to party paramount to duty to the country. This last, if it did not boldly participate with the rebels, was an auxiliary, and as a party, hostile to the Administration, and opposed to nearly every measure for suppressing the insurrection.

There were among the friends of the Administration, and especially during its last two years, radical differences, which in the first stages of the war were undeveloped. The mild and persuasive temper of the President, his generous and tolerant disposition, and his kind and moderate forbearance toward the rebels, whom he invited and would persuade to return to their allegiance and their duty, did not correspond with the schemes and designs of the extreme and violent leaders of the Republican party. They had other objects than reconstruction to attain, were implacable and revengeful, and some with ulterior radical views thought the opportunity favorable to effect a change of administration.

These had for years fomented division, encouraged strife, and were as ultra and as unreasonable in their demands and exactions as the secessionists. Some had welcomed war with grim satisfaction, and were for prosecuting it unrelentingly with fire and sword to the annihilation of the rights, and the absolute subversion of the Southern States and subjection of the Southern people. There was in their ranks unreasoning fanaticism, and ferocity that partook of barbarism, with a mixture of political intrigue fatal to our Federal system. These men, dis-

satisfied with President Lincoln, accused him of temporizing, of imbecility, and of sympathy with the rebels because he would not confiscate their whole property, and hang or punish them as pirates or traitors. These radical Republicans, as they were proud to call themselves, occupied, like all extreme men in high party and revolutionary times, the front rank of their party, and, though really a minority, gave tone and character to the Republican organization. Fired with avenging zeal, and often successful in their extreme views, though to some extent checked and modified by the President, they were presuming, and flattered themselves they could, if unsuccessful with Mr. Lincoln, effect a change in the administration of the Government in 1864 by electing a President who would conform to their ultra demands. Secret meetings and whispered consultations were held for that purpose, and for a time aspiring and calculating politicians gave them encouragement; but it soon became evident that the conservative sentiment of the Republicans and the country was with Mr. Lincoln, and that the confidence of the people in his patriotism and integrity was such as could not be shaken. Nevertheless, a small band of the radicals held out and would not assent to his benignant policy. These malcontents undertook to create a distinct political organization which, if possessed of power, would make a more fierce and unrelenting war on the rebels, break down their local institutions, overturn their State governments, subjugate the whites, elevate the blacks, and give not only freedom to the slaves, but by national decree override the States, and give suffrage to the whole colored race. These extreme and rancorous notions found no favor with Mr. Lincoln, who, though nominally a Whig in the past, had respect for the Constitution, loved the Federal Union, and had a sacred regard for the rights of the States, which the Whigs as a party did not entertain. War two years after secession commenced

brought emancipation, but emancipation did not dissolve the Union, consolidate the Government, or clothe it with absolute power; nor did it impair the authority and rights which the States had reserved. Emancipation was a necessary, not a revolutionary measure, forced upon the Administration by the secessionists themselves, who insisted that slavery which was local and sectional should be made national.

The war was, in fact, defensive on the part of the Government against a sectional insurrection which had seized the fortresses and public property of the nation; a war for the maintenance of the Union, not for its dissolution; a war for the preservation of individual, State, and Federal rights; good administration would permit neither to be sacrificed nor one to encroach on the other. The necessary exercise of extraordinary war powers to suppress the Rebellion had given encouragement and strength to the centralists who advocated the consolidation and concentration of authority in the general Government in peace as well as war, and national supervision over the States and people. Neither the radical enthusiasts nor the designing centralists admitted or subscribed to the doctrine that political power emanated from the people; but it was the theory of both that the authority exercised by the States was by grant derived from the parental or general Government. It was their theory that the Government created the States, not that the States and people created the Government. Some of them had acquiesced in certain principles which were embodied in the fundamental law called the Constitution; but the Constitution was in their view the child of necessity, a mere crude attempt of the theorists of 1776, who made successful resistance against British authority, to limit the power of the new central Government which was substituted for that of the crown. For a period after the Revolution it was admitted that feeble limitations on central authority had

been observed, though it was maintained that those limitations had been obstructions to our advancing prosperity, the cause of continual controversy, and had gradually from time to time been dispensed with, broken down, or made to yield to our growing necessities. The civil war had made innovations—a sweep, in fact, of many constitutional barriers—and radical consolidationists like Thaddeus Stevens and Henry Winter Davis felt that the opportunity to fortify central authority and establish its supremacy should be improved.

These were the ideas and principles of leading consolidationists and radicals in Congress who were politicians of ability, had studied the science of government, and were from conviction opponents of reserved rights and State sovereignty and of a mere confederation or Federal Union, based on the political equality and reserved sovereignty of the States, but insisted that the central Government should penetrate further and act directly on the people. Few of these had given much study or thought to fundamental principles, the character and structure of our Federal system, or the Constitution itself. Most of them, under the pressure of schemers and enthusiasts, were willing to assume and ready to exercise any power deemed expedient, regardless of the organic law. Almost unrestrained legislation to carry on the war induced a spirit of indifference to constitutional restraint, and brought about an assumption by some, a belief by others, that Congress was omnipotent; that it was the embodiment of the national will, and that the other departments of the Government as well as the States were subordinate and subject to central Congressional control. Absolute power, the centralists assumed and their fanatical associates seemed to suppose, was vested in the legislative body of the country, and its decrees, arbitrary and despotic, often originating in and carried first by a small vote in party caucus, were in all cases claimed to be decisive, and to be obeyed by the Execu-

tive, the judiciary, and the people, regardless of the Constitution. Parliamentary discussions were not permitted, or of little avail. The acts of caucus were despotic, mandatory, and decisive. The several propositions and plans of President Lincoln to reestablish the Union, and induce the seceding States to resume their places and be represented in Congress, were received with disfavor by the radical leaders, who, without open assault, set in motion an undercurrent against nearly every Executive proposition as the weak and impotent offspring of a well meaning and well intentioned, but not very competent and intelligent mind. It was the difference between President Lincoln and the radical leaders in Congress on the question of reconciliation, the restoration of the States, and the reestablishment of the Union on the original constitutional basis, which more than even his genial and tolerant feelings toward the rebels led to political intrigue among Republican members of Congress for the nomination of new candidates, and opposition to Mr. Lincoln's reelection in 1864. At one period this intrigue seemed formidable, and some professed friends lent it their countenance, if they did not actually participate in it, who ultimately disavowed any connection with the proceeding.

Singular ideas were entertained and began to be developed in propositions of an extraordinary character, relative to the powers and the construction of the Government, which were presented to Congress, even in the first year of the war. Theoretical schemes from cultivated intellects, as well as crude notions from less intellectual but extreme men, found expression in resolutions and plans, many of which were absurd and most of them impracticable and illegal. Foremost and prominent among them were a series of studied and elaborate resolutions prepared by Charles Sumner, and submitted to the Senate on the 11th of February, 1862. Although presented at that early day, they were the germ of the reconstruc-

tion policy adopted at a later period. In this plan or project for the treatment of the insurrectionary States and the people who resided in them, the Massachusetts Senator manifested little regard for the fundamental law or for State or individual rights. The high position which this Senator held in the Republican party and in Congress and the country, his cultured mind and scholarly attainments, his ardent if not always discreet zeal and efforts to free the slaves and endow the whole colored race, whether capable or otherwise, with all the rights and privileges, socially and politically, of the educated and refined white population whom they had previously served, his readiness and avowed intention to overthrow the local State governments and the social system where slavery existed, to subjugate the whites and elevate the blacks, will justify a special notice; for it was one of the first, if not the very first of the radical schemes officially presented to change the character of the Government and the previously existing distinctions between the races. His theory or plan may be taken as the pioneer of the many wild and visionary projects of the central and abolition force, that took shape and form not only during the war, but after hostilities ceased and the rebels were subdued.

Mr. Sumner introduced his scheme with a preamble which declared, among other things, that the "extensive territory" of the South had been "usurped by pretended governments and organizations"; that "the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, cannot be displaced in its rightful operation within this territory, but must ever continue the supreme law thereof, notwithstanding the doings of any pretended governments acting singly or in confederation in order to put an end to its supremacy." Therefore:

Resolved, 1st. That any vote of secession, or other act by which any State may undertake to put an end to the supremacy of the Constitution

within its territory, is inoperative and void against the Constitution, and when sustained by force it becomes a practical *abdication* by the State of all rights under the Constitution, while the treason which it involves still further works an instant *forfeiture* of all those functions and powers essential to the continued existence of the State as a body politic, so that from that time forward the territory falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress as other territory, and the State, being, according to the language of the law, *felo de se*, ceases to exist.

2d. That any combination of men assuming to act in the place of such State, attempting to ensnare or coerce the inhabitants thereof into a confederation hostile to the Union, is rebellious, treasonable, and destitute of all moral authority; and that such combination is a usurpation incapable of any constitutional existence and utterly lawless, so that everything dependent upon it is without constitutional or legal support.

3d. That the termination of a State under the Constitution necessarily causes the termination of those peculiar local institutions which, having no origin in the Constitution, or in those natural rights which exist independent of the Constitution, are upheld by the sole and exclusive authority of the State.

. . . Congress will assume complete jurisdiction of such vacated territory where such unconstitutional and illegal things have been attempted, and will proceed to establish therein republican forms of government under the Constitution.

It is not shown how a usurpation or illegal act by conspirators in any State or States could justify or make legal a usurpation by the general Government, as this scheme evidently was, nor by what authority Congress could declare that the illegal, inoperative, and void acts of usurpers who might have temporary possession of or be a majority in a State, could constitute a practical abdication by the State itself of all rights under the Constitution, regardless of the rights of a legal, loyal minority, guilty of no usurpation or attempted secession—the innocent victims of a conspiracy; nor where Congress or the Federal Government obtained authority to pronounce "an instant *forfeiture* of all those functions and powers essential to the continued existence of a State as a body politic, so that from that time forward the territory falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress as other territory, and the State, being, according to the language of the law, *felo de se*, ceases to exist."

The administration of Mr. Buchanan

had laid down as a rule of government that a State could not be coerced. The whole country not in rebellion had declared there should be no secession, division, or destruction of the Federal Union, but here was the most conspicuous leader of the Republican party in the Senate proposing a scheme to punish a State, to annihilate and destroy its government, to territorialize it, to exclude or expel it from the Union, to make no discrimination in its exclusions and denunciations between the loyal and disloyal inhabitants, but to punish alike, without trial or conviction, the just and the unjust. There were, though he was unwilling to admit it, and was perhaps unaware of it, vindictive feelings, venom, and revenge in his resolutions and in his whole treatment of the States and the white people of the South. From the time that he had been stricken down by the bludgeon of Brooks in the Senate, Mr. Sumner waged unrelenting war on the whites in the Southern States, and seemed to suppose it was his special mission—he certainly made it the great object of his life—to elevate the negro race—to give them at least equal rights and privileges with the educated and refined class—and did not conceal his intention and expectation to bring them in as auxiliaries to the Republican party, and thereby give it permanent ascendancy. All this was done in the name of humanity, and with apparent self-convinced sincerity. He was unwilling to acknowledge that he was governed or influenced by personal resentments in his revolutionary plans to degrade the intelligent white and exalt the ignorant black population by tearing down the constitutional edifice. In frequent interviews which I held with him then and at later periods, when he found it impossible to hold his positions under the Constitution, he claimed that he occupied higher ground, and that his authority for these violent measures was the Declaration of Independence, which declared all men were born equal, etc. Mr. Sumner was an idealist—neither a constitutionalist nor

a practical statesman. He could pull down, but he could not construct—could declare what he considered humane, right, and proper, and act upon it regardless of constitutional compromises or conventional regulations which were the framework of the Government. No man connected with the Administration, or in either branch of Congress, was more thoroughly acquainted with our treaties, so familiar with the traditions of the Government, or better informed on international law than Charles Sumner; but on almost all other Governmental questions he was impulsive and unreliable, and when his feelings were enlisted, imperious, dogmatical, and often unjust.

Why innocent persons who were loyal to the Government and the Union should be disfranchised and proscribed because their neighbors and fellow citizens had engaged in a conspiracy, he could not explain or defend. By what authority whole communities and States should be deprived of the local governments which their fathers had framed, under which they were born, and with the provisions and traditions of which they were familiar, was never told.

His propositions found no favor with the Administration, nor were they supported at the beginning by any considerable number even of the extremists in Congress. It required much training by the centralizing leaders for years and all the tyranny of caucus machinery after the death of Mr. Lincoln to carry them into effect by a series of reconstruction measures that were revolutionary in their character, and which to a certain extent unsettled the principles on which the Government was founded.

But the counsel and example of the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts were not without their influence. Resolutions by radical Republicans and counter resolutions, chiefly by Democrats, relative to the powers and limitations of the Federal Government and the status of States, followed in quick succession. On the 11th of June, the

subject having been agitated and discussed for four months, Mr. Dixon, a Republican Senator from Connecticut, whose views coincided in the main with those of Mr. Lincoln and the Administration, submitted, after consultation and advisement, the following:

Resolved, That all acts or ordinances of secession, alleged to have been adopted by any legislature or convention of the people of any State, are as to the Federal Union absolutely null and void; and that while such acts may and do subject the individual actors therein to forfeitures and penalties, they do not, in any degree, affect the relations of the State wherein they purport to have been adopted to the Government of the United States, but are as to such Government acts of rebellion, insurrection, and hostility on the part of the individuals engaged therein, or giving assent thereto; and that such States are, notwithstanding such acts or ordinances, members of the Federal Union, and as such are subject to all the obligations and duties imposed upon them by the Constitution of the United States; and the loyal citizens of such States are entitled to all the rights and privileges thereby guaranteed or conferred.

The resolution of Dixon traversed the policy of Sumner and was the Executive view of the questions that were agitated in Congress as to the effect of the rebellion and the condition of the States in insurrection. The Administration did not admit that rebellion dissolved the Union or destroyed its federative character; nor did it adopt or assent to the novel theory that the States and the whole people residing in them had forfeited all sovereignty and all reserved State and individual rights, because a portion of the inhabitants had rebelled; nor did it admit that the usurpation of a portion of any community could bring condemnation and punishment on all. The usurpations and acts of the rebels were considered not legal acts, but nullities.

GIDEON WELLES.

LUCILLE'S LETTER.

OUT of the dreary distance and the dark

I stretch forth praying palms—yet not to pray;
Hands fold themselves for heaven, while mine, alas!
Are sundered—held your way.

Brief moments have been ours, yet bright as brief;
Oh! how I live them over, one by one,
Now that the endless days, bereft of you,
Creep slowly, sadly on.

Garnered in memory, those bewildering hours,
A golden harvest of enchantment yield;
Here, like a pale, reluctant Ruth, I glean
A cold and barren field—

Barren without a shelter: and the hedge
Is made of thorns and brambles. If I fain
Would lean beyond the barrier, do you see
The wounding and the stain?

Did God make us to mock us, on the earth?
Why did he fuse our spirits by His word,
Then set His awful Angel in our path,
His Angel with the sword?

Why, when I contrite kneel confessing all,
And seek with tears the way to be forgiven—
Why do your pleading eyes look sadly down
Between my face and heaven?

Why does my blood thrill at your fancied touch—
Stop and leap up at your ideal caress?
Ah, God! to feel that dear warm mouth on mine
In lingering tenderness!

To lie at perfect peace upon your heart,
Your arms close folded round me firm and fast,
My cheek to yours—oh, vision dear as vain!
That would be home at last.

Leon, you are my curse, my blessing too,
My hell, my heaven, my storm that wrecks to save:
Life daunts me, and the shadows lengthen out
Beyond the grave.

MARY L. RITTER.

